REMARKS

In the aforenoted Office communication, all of the claims in the application were rejected based on the disclosures in the patents to Haines and Chou and with regard to certain claims, based on the further teachings in Ozols. Generally speaking, the examiner's position is that the Haines patent discloses a window covering with guide cords routed substantially as described in the claims even though tension springs were used rather than compression springs as provided for in the claims of the present application. The examiner noted, however, that compression springs were used in the Chou system which is a window covering. What is not shown in the prior art, however, is the use of a compression spring within an upper or lower rail in which tension springs have previously been used. The examiner's position is that the teaching of a compression spring in a window covering through the Chou reference would render it obvious to replace the tension springs of Haines with compression springs.

While at first blush, the examiner's position may seem tenable, in reality, the rails in which the springs are positioned for tensioning the guide cords are very small in dimension and therefore there are severe space restrictions in such rails, particularly for incorporating springs for tensioning the guide cord. While tension springs can be used, it is not easy to use a compression spring in a confined space as it needs to be a very small diameter and in order to obtain its desired usefulness in the window covering, it would therefore have to have a relatively long length. Long and slim compression springs will buckle when compressed and, accordingly, the buckling needs to be controlled within the rail in which the spring is mounted.

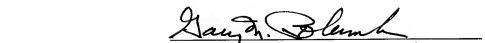
In order to deal with the issues raised by utilizing a compression spring in the confined space of a rail, applicant extended the guide cords through the springs so as to pull the springs from an opposite end for compression and further provided housings for the springs which are only slightly greater in diameter than the diameter of the spring to prevent buckling. Such concepts are not shown or disclosed in the prior art, and even in the Chou reference where a compression spring is utilized in a window covering environment, it does not include a guide cord that extends therethrough for compressing the spring nor a housing that is only slightly greater than the spring to prevent buckling.

In order to better distinguish the claims in the present application from the prior art, independent claim 22, which is the only independent claim in the application, has been amended to state that the compression spring of a cord tensioner has a guide cord extending therethrough. As mentioned, this is one means by which compression springs can be incorporated into the limited space of rails in a window covering. Further, dependent claim 24 has been amended to state that the housing provided therein has a diameter slightly larger than the spring which of course is another way of utilizing a compression spring in the small confines of a rail in a window covering.

For the above-noted reasons, it is felt the claims in the application are now patentably distinct from the prior art and there being no other objections to the application, it is felt that it is in condition for allowance and such action is courteously requested.

Dated: May 9, 2006.

Respectfully submitted,



Gary M. Polumbus, Reg. No. 25,364
DORSEY & WHITNEY LLP
370 Seventeenth Street, Suite 4700
Denver, Colorado 80202-5647
Tel: 303-629-3400
Fax: 303-629-3450

USPTO Customer No.: 20686

GMP/lem/dtc